

Select Committee Agenda



Stronger Council Select Committee Tuesday, 19th January, 2021

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **Stronger Council Select Committee**, which will be held at:

**Virtual Meeting on Zoom
on Tuesday, 19th January, 2021
at 7.00 pm**

**G Blakemore
Chief Executive**

**Democratic Services
Officer**

A Hendry
Email: democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors P Bolton (Chairman), D Stocker (Vice-Chairman), R Bassett, H Brady, R Brookes, D Dorrell, H Kane, S Neville, M Owen, S Rackham and J M Whitehouse

SUBSTITUTE NOMINATION DEADLINE 6.00PM

WEBCASTING NOTICE

Please note: this meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site - at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed.

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Therefore by participating in this virtual meeting, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes. If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should ensure that their video setting throughout the virtual meeting is turned off and set to audio only.

In the event that technical difficulties interrupt the virtual meeting that cannot be overcome, the Chairman may need to adjourn the meeting.

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact the Corporate Communications Manager on 01992 564039.

1. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

This virtual meeting is to be webcast. Members are reminded of the need to unmute before speaking.

The Chairman will read the following announcement:

“I would like to remind everyone present that this meeting will be broadcast live to the internet (or filmed) and will be capable of repeated viewing (or another use by such third parties). Therefore by participating in this virtual meeting, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes. If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should ensure that their video setting throughout the virtual meeting is turned off and set to audio only.

Please also be aware that if technical difficulties interrupt the meeting that cannot be overcome, I may need to adjourn the meeting.”

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

4. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 3 - 12)

To agree the notes of the meeting of the Select Committee held on 13 October 2020.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To declare interests in any item on the agenda.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE & WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 13 - 16)

(Chairman/Lead Officer) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed the terms of reference and work programme for the select committee. Members are invited at each meeting to review both documents.

7. DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS 2021/22 (Pages 17 - 30)

To consider the attached report on the draft Budget proposals for 2021/22.

8. ACCOMMODATION UPDATE (Pages 31 - 32)

To consider the attached report on the accommodation update for the council offices.

9. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORTING (Pages 33 - 54)

To consider the attached report on the quarter 3 performance data.

10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

To note the next meeting date of this Committee will be held on:

13 April 2021.

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**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF STRONGER COUNCIL SELECT COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2020
IN VIRTUAL MEETING ON ZOOM
AT 7.00 - 8.38 PM**

- Members Present:** P Bolton (Chairman), D Stocker (Vice-Chairman), R Bassett (Member), H Brady, R Brookes, D Dorrell, H Kane (Chairman of the Council), S Neville (Leader of the Green Party Group), S Rackham and J M Whitehouse
- Other members present:** N Bedford, S Kane, S Murray, A Patel, J Philip, M Sartin and J H Whitehouse
- Apologies for Absence:**
- Officers Present** A Small (Strategic Director), C Hartgrove (Interim Chief Finance Officer), L Wade (Service Director (Strategy, Delivery & Performance)), P Maginnis (Service Director (Corporate Services)), A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer), J Leither (Democratic Services Officer) and N Cole (Corporate Communications Officer)

15. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Chairman reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its virtual meetings.

16. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

The Committee noted that there were no substitute members.

17. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting held 14 July 2020 were agreed as a correct record subject to officers chasing up an answer to Councillor Neville's question on what type of gas would be used in the air conditioning system Minute item 9). He also noted a typographical error in the preceding paragraph.

Post meeting update: *In answer to Councillor Neville's question on the air conditioning system, the following was obtained after the meeting:*

Two of the Air Handling Units contain 'coolants'. AHU 01 serving the main Civic Hall is provided with DX cooling utilising R410a refrigerant. AHU 02 serving the old Civic Suite (now office and break-out) is provided with cooling utilising chilled water, supplied from two replacement packaged chillers. The chillers themselves utilise R410a refrigerant.

Throughout the building new VRF comfort cooling installations are being provided, utilising R410a refrigerant. R410a refrigerant has a GWP (Global Warming

Potential) of 2088 which is the better of the current refrigerants, and common to all current VRF systems.

Many AC manufacturers are developing towards utilising R32 refrigerant, which has a GWP of 675. Currently though, there is limited range availability and will likely not be fully adopted by the industry until the back end of 2021.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor S Murray declared a personal interest in item 8, Accommodation Project, by virtue of being a trustee of Citizen's Advice. The Councillor had determined that his interest was non-pecuniary and he would remain in the meeting for the consideration of this item.

(b) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor R Bassett declared a personal interest in item 8, Accommodation Project (section 3), by virtue of being the Chairman of Community Transport. The Councillor had determined that his interest was non-pecuniary and he would remain in the meeting for the consideration of this item.

19. TERMS OF REFERENCE & WORK PROGRAMME

The Select Committee noted their terms of reference and work programme.

20. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT 2020-21 - QUARTERS 1 & 2

The Director for Strategy, Delivery and Performance, L Wade, introduced the report on corporate performance management. This was representative of the programmes of change and the amount of work being delivered across the Council. The initial overview report would have been delivered at the beginning of the financial year, however with officer's focus on the Covid recovery response this had to be delayed.

The first part of the report related to the internal governance review and structure, aligning to the Stronger Select Committees. An internal officer governance structure had been established to focus on the delivery of the Corporate programmes aligned to the Stronger ambition objectives. Programmes would be led by a director enabling Corporate Performance management to be aligned with individual performance management.

The next part of the report was on corporate performance management, setting out the scope of the work and the scope of each of the programmes across the council. Officers had been working with the programme delivery leads to establish clear project briefs for each programme of work along with a roadmap and clear set of milestones to allow the measurement of delivery and progress. L Wade asked the committee if they would like to see the progress of all the programmes or just the exceptions.

Councillor Rackham said that she would like to see all progress not just the ones highlighted; it was important that the Committee scrutinised properly. Councillor Neville agreed with her.

Councillor Bassett noted that there was a lot going on and with the changes with Covid and the impact that it would have. Was this timetable going to be drastically

affected or were these dates reasonably firm. Members needed to look at everything, as they just did not know what was happening and that things were changing rapidly.

The Chairman agreed that it was important to have these reports for members to scrutinise.

L Wade drew the meeting's attention to the three exceptions. The first was the Telecare project, which was now delayed due to Essex County Council withdrawing their initial tender process.

The next was the ICT restructure, this was delayed following the impact of Covid and the recruitment of an interim service manager. However, three team managers have now been appointed.

Thirdly, the impact on the Local Plan, due to the review of the Main Modification delayed document submission and as a result of the inspector's capacity to review the report.

Councillor Neville asked about the Cyber Security review, would we be able to withstand an attack on our systems as Hackney Council had just undergone. The Director for Corporate Services replied that cyber security was kept under constant review; our systems were robust while letting our staff freedom to attend various virtual meetings and training sessions etc. She could not remember an incident where our systems had been breached.

Councillor Neville then asked about the Climate Change programme and how could members give their views on the climate change programme before it went to the Cabinet. He was told that officers would advise members on how this would happen. *(Post meeting update: N Dawe would reach out directly regarding this).*

Councillor Neville asked if there were any plans to bring any sustainable transport to the south of the district although it was quite well served by public transport already. He was told that his query would be put to the officers concerned.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse asked about the people programme items and asked how the recruitment of staff was going, what were the outcomes on reducing the vacancy rate and about reducing the use of agency staff. The Corporate Services Director replied that they could look at some KPI measures to include that sort of information.

Councillor Bassett noted that Essex CC had withdrawn from Telecare, did we know why; and what would be the cost implications of this as we were in the process of winding it down. He was told that the withdrawal was partly due to Covid and the results of that; officers would be asked for specific details to be put into the minutes. As for the cost implications the resources were still in place and being currently assessed. Part of the outcome was that a report would be going to Cabinet in January.

Councillor Bassett noted that the progress boxes in the sections for Members, Partnership working and Digital payments were blank, why was this? He was told that these related to later milestones and so any progress would not have happened as yet.

Councillor Bassett noted that under the customer excellence programme it said that Customer Survey completed and presented; where were they presented? He was told that an update was presented as a summary at the July Overview and Scrutiny

Committee. The actions to be taken to address survey were already included in the Customer Strategy. If further detailed information was required, this could be obtained from Susan Lewis.

Councillor Bassett remarked that under the digital solutions to improve processes in the planning department – the timescales seemed a bit short to carry this through. He was told that officers were trying to be ambitious with this looking at the minimum viable product in terms of how we actually implement this as part of a minimum first phase and were also looking for ‘out-of-the-box’ solutions.

Councillor Bassett then asked what the first project of the newly appointed Climate change officer would be. He was told that this would come out of the action plan that was presently being discussed.

Councillor Dorrell remarked on the digital solutions and shared councillor’s Bassett’s concerns over the time scales which was part of a long process. He noted that we were down to 2 suppliers and one was over budget; were they a long way over budget, as the Council was trying to avoid a situation where we only had one tender. L Wade said that we currently had two vendors who looked to meet our requirements. We were looking at professional service costs and also looking at how much we could do in-house. Councillor Dorrell asked if one of the two came in at way over budget, were we then down to just one again? He was told that it depends what they were offering, and it come down to either a cost solution or a strategic solution, as part of the evaluation process.

Councillor Rackham expressed concerns about Covid and how it would impact on us if we had another lockdown and how it would affect our corporate plans. A Small replied that our plans were as stated, but could be affected by events, and we would have to adapt accordingly. If we moved into tier two, then most plans would be unaffected. Most work was currently being delivered by staff working from home. The problem was face to face interactions. We will report back to this committee on any problems encountered.

Councillor Murray said that he agreed with Mr Small. He asked about the telecare offering and were we happy that we would able to carry on offering the telecare services until we got a new operator. He was told that was the case, we shall carry on for now and a report on costs and an assessment would be part of a report going to Cabinet. A fuller answer will be put in the minutes. *(Post meeting update: confirmation that the TELECARE offering would in no way be impacted during the interim and a full report will be seen at Cabinet regarding costs).*

Councillor Bedford commented that it was important that we kept our standards up for the telecare service and got assurances that this system was secure for us. He went on to comment about the Local Plan and the Main Modifications, they have now been submitted to the inspector but there was a problem with the inspector having sufficient time to deal with them. But we trying to push it through. Finally, he asked for caution when discussing the digital planning solutions as this maybe currently ‘commercial in confidence’. But just to say that whatever system we will go for would be state of the art as our current system was about 25 years old.

L Wade then asked if there were any questions on the KPIs presented in the report. She indicated most had been directly impacted by Covid, she had also suggested some KPIs for 20/21 for future reference.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse asked about the proposed Diversity and Inclusion KPI, what would that consist of. He was told that currently officers were in discussions to recognise that we did need a KPI around diversity and Inclusion.

Councillor Bedford asked what the increase in household waste during Covid was. He was told that the figures indicated our targets from last year, and it did show an increase. Asked about the cost implications for the increase officers were unsure but said that they would find out and report back.

Councillor Bedford then asked about Leisure Management KPIs, we should get some feedback from the leisure management about how Covid has affected their business and how we could support them going forward. Officers had seen a pick-up in figures recently but now it has been going down as winter was coming and a second lock down was on the cards.

RESOLVED:

1. The Committee noted the contents of the report and the scope of the corporate programme of work and associated benefits.
2. The Committee agreed that all programmes and projects be report back to them and not just exceptional outcomes.
3. The Committee noted the Q1 and Q2 performance of the KPI and agreed the recommended KPIs for 20/21 performance.

21. ACCOMMODATION PROJECT

The Director for Strategy, Delivery and Performance, L Wade, introduced the report on the ongoing Accommodation Project. The committee noted that the Accommodation Programme Board continued to meet monthly to oversee the delivery of the programme and covered the following workstreams:

1. Refurbishment works
2. Infrastructure and Technology
3. Travel Plan
4. Furniture, fixtures and fittings
5. Change & Ways of Working
6. Partners and Commercial opportunities
7. Customer Service Workstream

The refurbishment works were going well and the AV design specification had been progressed; the appendix to the report included photos of the types of new technology that they hoped to incorporate into the new offices. Discussions had progressed on the Travel Plans with the newly appointed Sustainable Transport Officer where they were exploring sustainable options for travel to the office as part of the wider sustainable transport project and the use of DRT (Demand Responsive Transport).

Officers were currently reviewing the space requirements in light of the flexible working and use of the building. The requirements for furniture and fittings were at the final stage of design. The result would be an open and modern environment retaining and showcasing the listed features of the Civic. The final review would happen in the coming few weeks.

The programme was not just about the offices but delivering a new way of working, the employees continued to embrace remote working. As for the space in the building the Council have had some positive interest in the use of the building and initial discussions were looking positive.

And finally, as from the Programme Board meeting in September, the contract sum was within the agreed 2020/21 budget approved at Full Council.

Councillor Neville asked if the proposed travel plan report going to the December Cabinet would be shared with councillors in advance of this. He was told that it would hopefully be shared by mid-November.

Councillor Rackham asked if the travel plan would be subject to change at short notice if employees decided they wanted to work from home. She was told that for the most part employees were looking to work more flexibly from home and officers were beginning to understand how they could best utilise the spaces they had.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse said it was a shame that the travel plan had slipped. Could officers say which problem this plan was the solution to. Was it so that officers could park elsewhere and then summon demand responsive transport to the offices or was it a service from home to the civic offices? L Wade said that at this stage it was as an alternative mode of transport, they were still trying to understand the coverage of this and part of the understanding of the scope of the replacement of the 87 bus. Based on this they would see what the needs of the employees were.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse then went on to query the commercialisation of the building space, would we market the conference suite as well. He was told this did not feature at present, but it was something that we would look at in the future.

Councillor Bassett as Chairman of Community Transport confirmed that they have had several discussions with the Council this was for transport for local people or pick people from the transport hubs such as tube stations and bring them on from there. This had proved successful in the Harlow area and they were looking to bring it to Epping Forest. It's a reasonably cost effective solution.

Councillor Murray understood that there was a need to work from home at present, but he hoped they had not lost sight of collaborative working. Nationally, younger members of staff felt that they are losing out by working like this. He went on to ask where could he find the original budget for this accommodation project and the agreed variances*; and what was the current expenditure? Also, could he have a list of our partners who would be joining us. He added that as a trustee of the CAB he knew that it was not financially viable for them to occupy an office in our new building. L Wade replied that collaborative office space was a big part of the design for the civic offices. They also recognised that they needed to consider every employee needs especially junior staff and new entrants and to this end we had established virtual networks for new staff. As for the first part of the question, she could include the costs as part of the minutes, and she would check if it was possible to include the names of our potential partners in the Civic Offices. Councillor Murray said that he was particularly interested the community groups and not the commercial organisations.

****Post meeting update: against the refurbishment budget approved at the 1st June Cabinet, the current numbers were as follows:
Budget - £6,875,000;***

*Current Spend to date - £2,008,957;
Forecast spend - £6,783,184; and
Positive Variance - £91,816.*

RESOLVED:

That the Committee noted the progress on the Accommodation Programme.

22. PEOPLE STRATEGY

The Director for Corporate Services, P Maginnis, introduced the report update on Peoples Services. To begin with she picked up some questions that were asked at the last meeting of this Committee about vacancies and consultants. As of 21 September 2020, an exercise had been carried out looking at vacancies, at roles that had been vacant for at least six months. They found that there were 26 vacancies, some of which were being covered by agency staff. As for Consultants/Agency Staff we had 23 of them at present, scattered throughout the organisation, mostly in qualified, professional rolls.

As for the people strategy update. The People Strategy and Plan set out clear actions and timescales over a two-year period to support the Council deliver its strategic objectives and was divided into 6 workstreams:

- Attracting, on boarding and retaining the best talent
- Developing our leadership
- Embracing change to support EFDC evolution
- Creating a culture of engagement and wellbeing
- Developing our skills and behaviours to make EFDC a great place to work
- Achieving organisational goals through a high performing and flexible workforce

At the core was transforming the People Team to become an enabler for the organisation.

The Strategy sets out the ambition for our workforce – the right people with the right skills, highly motivated high performing and business efficient.

The Covid Pandemic meant that they had brought projects forward in order to support staff and they were providing more resources for staff during the winter months. Some of this was researched by looking at how the Norwegians got themselves ready for their long winter and what their mindset was.

They have also launched an employee assisted programme to enable employees to access discounts online along with medical access. There was also a lot of training available for staff, including first aid and mental health training and e learning packages.

As for developing skills and behaviours there was a programme for management apprenticeships. We have appointed four housing apprentices and they will start their Chartered Institute of Housing qualifications. We were exceeding our public sector duty in terms of apprenticeships – we were expected to have 15 apprentices in our organisation but have actually got 23.

We have recently undertaken a realignment of services to ensure that the projects to assist our residents and businesses in terms of Covid recovery had been aligned

correctly. They were also looking to automate and improve the current recruitment processes using the current IT systems and working with our partner organisations.

Councillor Rackham asked why, when we had 23 Consultants/agency staff in place, were we not filling the vacancies with permanent staff. She was told that they were currently looking at the vacancies, looking to see if they were actually required, they would then know if there were any chance of making savings. Looking at the list they were not additional rolls, but they were filling vacant rolls across the organisation.

Councillor Brookes commented that Covid had taken a lot of officers' time up during this pandemic. What about the time they would have spent doing their regular work? P Maginnis said that they had refocussed and reprioritised their work during this time. Extra Environmental Health officers had been taken on, for which we had received further funding, to work on Covid. A Small agreed that officers had been very busy and some projects had slipped because of this but we had contained this as best as we could. Councillor Brookes noted that Directors had been working under a lot of pressure and had taken on a lot of extra work. A Small agreed that it had been a big challenge for staff. The organisations response had been exceptional and had kept their work to a high standard. However, the extra workload has had to be prioritised and fitted in with the day to day stuff.

Councillor Sam Kane added that the extra workload that all staff had, especially senior management, emphasised the importance of the wellbeing work that the People Team did.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee noted the People's Strategy report.

23. REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2019-20

The interim Chief Finance Officer, Christopher Hartgrove, introduced the Revenue and Capital Outturn for 2019-20 report. He noted that the figures were still subject to external audit and it was technically possible it might change.

It was a good news story for 2019-20. The Council had ended the year with an overall positive revenue variance on General Fund service budgets of £908,000, whereas the ring-fenced Housing Revenue Account recorded a negative revenue variance of £285,000, for which Covid had played a part.

The minimum contingency balance requirements adopted by the Council had been met at year-end on both the General Fund and the HRA.

Councillor Brookes commented that at another Committee meeting it had been said that kitchen and bathroom improvements had stopped; had they stopped because we needed to save money at present or was it because of Covid. A Small said that it was largely Covid related, but this had stopped in 20/21 but this report was for 19/20.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse asked if this was a phasing issue because of Covid, to be picked up later, or is it a permanent saving. Also, on the HRA right to buy receipts – have they been reinvested or given back to the government. Councillor J Philip said that this was a finance report was on the outturn for 2019/20, this should be taken up with the panel that looks into housing repairs. Councillor Whitehouse said that it was appropriate to ask if it was a phasing issue or a saving. Councillor Philip said that this report looked at what happened, not an outlook one. C Hartgrove said that he

believed that it was just a phasing issue. Also, he could confirm that return of RTB receipts was averted at the end of 2019/20 at year end; as for 20/21 the current issues were that there were some slight delays on this and was some risks if the council did not spend the receipts.

Councillor Bassett noted that at appendix A, general fund revenue outturn, business support, accommodation, we had allowed £19k with a variance of £1.026million with an actual of £1.045million what caused the variance? He was told that it was an accounting adjustment. The actual variance was only £4k.

Councillor Bassett then asked about the large structural schemes, was that all down to the damaging tree roots. He was told that it was chiefly that, but there were other issues as well.

RESOLVED:

- (1) The Committee noted the Revenue outturn for 2019/20 for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) as presented within the report, including *Appendix A*;
- (2) The Committee noted the General Fund Reserve position presented in Section 4;
- (3) The Committee noted the HRA Balance set out in Section 4, including the retention of £0.5 million originally approved for transfer to the Self-Financing Financing Reserve (prior to consideration for approval by Cabinet); and
- (4) The Committee noted the Capital Programme outturn for 2019/20 as presented within the report, including *Appendix B*.

24. QUARTER 1 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT (GENERAL FUND)

The interim Chief Finance Officer, Christopher Hartgrove, introduced the quarter 1, budget monitoring report. The report presented the first four month's (till the end July 2020) General Fund Budget Monitoring report for Epping Forest District Council and reported on the first four months of the pandemic and the financial impact of that. The full position was summarised in appendix A of the report. This report will also be going to Cabinet at their 19 October meeting and was here for pre scrutiny. Because of underspends elsewhere, due to our restricted ability to deliver in some service areas, our projected overspend was currently at £1.9million. Actual variance were picked out in section 3 of the report. The area coming under the most pressure was the Contracts and Technical Services functions. As for the support we were getting from the Government; at present we were projecting something in the region of £3.5m, we had actually received £1.6m in grants. It has also undertaken an income loss scheme and under the statutory fees and charges compensation scheme we have just put in a claim for £725k. this is the first of 3. By year end it should be £1.87million.

Councillor Philip noted that this report was just a snapshot of where we were after the first four (Covid) months; paragraph 1.7 was the key one, looking forward, as this was at an early stage of the year. How it would look at the end of the year, quite frankly we did not know yet.

C Hartgrove added that we had a reasonable balance level of just under £8m available to meet overspends.

Councillor Jon Whitehouse referenced sharing the pain with the Leisure contract losses, how was this calculated? A Small said that he would have to speak to the contract officer and put something in the minutes.

Councillor Bassett said that this was a most useful report, to see what Covid was doing to the council. We did not know what the long term effects would be, but he thanked the officers for putting us in this relatively strong position. A Small stressed just what an exceptional year this had been, and we did not know when it would end. We did not know how the government would continue to support us, so it was difficult to develop a budget for next year.

Councillor Philip added that we had good reserves but did not want to fall into the trap of spending our reserves as we did not know what would happen next year.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the content of this report.

25. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Committee noted their future meeting dates.

STRONGER COUNCIL SELECT COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE 2019/20

Core Areas of Responsibility

- (1) To provide scrutiny for the following corporate projects:
 - People Strategy;
 - Accommodation Strategy; and
 - Digital Enablement
- (2) To monitor the Corporate Plan Action Plan performance report and provide scrutiny of services that are not performing to standard and develop proposals for their improvement. The Stronger Council Select Committee in its review of Corporate Key Performance Indicators can task other Select Committees to review service performance and develop proposals for improvement.

Scrutiny Role of the Select Committee

- (1) To engage in policy review and development, with a focus on improvement and how this can be best achieved;
- (2) To develop a work programme each year that effectively scrutinises the areas of responsibility outlined above;
- (3) To consider any matter referred by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet or a Portfolio Holder and to make recommendations as appropriate;
- (4) To consider the effect of Government actions or initiatives that affect the Select Committees areas of responsibility and the impact on customers, residents, businesses and visitors to our district, and to respond to consultation activities as appropriate;
- (5) To establish working groups and task and finish panels to undertake any activity within these terms of reference;
- (6) To undertake pre-scrutiny through the review of specific proposals of the Council and its partner organisations or other local service providers to help develop policy;
- (7) To monitor and review relevant projects and associated closure and benefits reports; and
- (8) To engage with the community and encourage community engagement.

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**Stronger Council Select Committee
Work Programme 2019/20
Chairman: Councillor P Bolton**

No.	Item	Deadline	Progress and Comments	Programme of Meetings
1.	Corporate Plan Action Plan (KPI's by exception) – performance scrutiny	Corporate Action Plan KPI's, Q1 Apr, May, Jun – 9 July 19 meeting Q2 Jul, Aug, Sept - 8 Oct 19 meeting Q3 Oct, Nov, Dec - 14 Jan 20 meeting Q4 Jan, Feb, Mar – 14 Apr 20 meeting Live system reporting – by exception. No pre- distributed reports, projection of live data on the night.		9 July 2019 8 October 2019 14 January 2020 14 April 2020
2.	People Strategy	9 July and 8 Oct - Project reporting, issues focussed.		
3.	Digital Enablement	Prioritisation of Council Technology strategy. Outcome focussed. 14 January 20.		
4.	Accommodation	9 July and 8 Oct 19 - Project reporting, issues focussed		
5.	Financial Issues Paper	9 July 19 Scrutiny of MTFS 20/21 onwards		

6.	Draft budget scrutiny	2020/21 budget setting (joint with FPMCC) 14 January 20		
7.	Asset Management Strategy	Council asset strategy (new)		
8.	Review of Polling Places and Polling Districts	9 July 2019		
8.	Review of local elections 2019	October 2019		



Report to Stronger Council Select Committee

Date of meeting: 19 January 2021

Portfolio: Finance and Economic Development – Cllr Philip

SCRUTINY



Subject: Draft Budget Proposals 2021/22

Officer contact for further information: Andrew Small

Democratic Services Officer: Adrian Hendry

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) To consider the Cabinet's draft budget proposals, as set out in the attached paper, and to make such comments or recommendations as the Committee feels appropriate so that Cabinet can consider these on 11 February 2021 when they agree their final budget proposals to Council.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Cabinet considered their draft Budget Proposals for 2021/22 on the 22nd December. At that meeting they agreed the proposals should go forward for Scrutiny by this Stronger Council Select Committee.
- 1.2. Cabinet were informed of the difficulties involved in developing a set of draft budget proposals this year and that as a consequence the proposals were less well developed and liable to change, as better information becomes available.
- 1.3. The report stated that Stronger Council Select Committee would be verbally updated at their meeting on the latest position and any substantive changes which had occurred since the draft budget report was published.
- 1.4. The report is attached as Appendix A and Stronger Council Select Committee is asked to consider Cabinet's draft proposals and to make such comments as they wish for Cabinet to consider on 11th February when they will make their final proposals to Council.

2. Resource Implications

- 2.1. These are contained within the body of this report.

3. Legal and Governance Implications

- 3.1. None contained within this report.

4. Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications

- 4.1. None.

5. Consultation Undertaken

- 5.1. None.

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Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-055-2020/21
Date of meeting: 22 December 2020



Portfolio: Finance and Economic Development – Cllr J. Philip

Subject: Draft Budget Proposals 2021/22

Responsible Officer: Andrew Small (07548 145665).

Democratic Services: Adrian Hendry (01992 564246).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To consider the attached draft budget proposals and suggest amendments considered necessary; and**
- (2) To request the Stronger Council Select Committee to consider the draft budget proposals, and the emerging Medium-Term Financial Plan, and make comments to Cabinet for their consideration.**

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The attached report sets out for Cabinet's consideration, draft Budget proposals for 2021/22, for the Council's General Fund. The proposals have been developed within the framework set by the Medium-Term Term Financial Plan (MTFP) adopted by Cabinet on 16th November 2020.
- 1.2. Emerging draft proposals for the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2021/22 are also presented for consideration, following the recent completion of a review of the latest HRA position against the Council's adopted 30-Year Business Plan.
- 1.3. If approved by Cabinet, subject to any proposed amendments, the report will proceed for consideration by the Stronger Council Select Committee on 19th January 2021, before returning to Cabinet. Once Cabinet has considered the views of the Stronger Council Select Committee, and the budget has been updated for the latest developments, the final Budget proposals and an updated MTFP will be submitted to Council in February.
- 1.4. The Budget development process is exceptional this year, in that Covid-19 is having, and will continue to have, a huge impact on many areas of the Council's income and expenditure. The impact, and continued uncertainty, is expected to continue into 2021/22 – at least during the early months – as the vaccine is rolled out, with the expected resumption of 'normality' later in 2021. This is making the preparation of robust budgets exceptionally challenging, which has meant many significant assumptions have had to be made at this stage.

- 1.5. As information continues to emerge, which helps to clarify these uncertainties, officers will continue to refine the base budget assumptions. However, this is not happening fast enough to resolve the budget in a manner consistent with the publication timetable for Epping Forest District Council's democratic meetings.
- 1.6. This means that the budget is less well developed than would normally be expected, and publication deadlines are being squeezed in order to get greater certainty, to ensure a reasonable trade-off between refinement and the need for meaningful scrutiny.
- 1.7. Like the environment in which it is being set, the budget development process also needs to be dynamic this year in order to produce the most robust result for 2021/22, and to provide the Council with a budget which it can safely operate within.
- 1.8. Consequentially, in order to provide a few more days to develop the draft budget, the draft budget paper will be issued as a Supplementary paper ahead of the Cabinet meeting. Even then, it is anticipated that higher number of amendments and refinements than usual are likely to be made in February 2021 when Cabinet reconsiders its draft proposals in the light of the views of the Stronger Council Select Committee.
- 1.9. To ensure that the Stronger Council Select Committee has the best available information, the Committee will be updated on national and local changes which are likely to affect the budget proposals at its meeting on 19th January 2021.

2. Resource Implications

- 2.1. A wide range of financial implications are covered in the report, with the emphasis on how the Council can continue to fund its current net expenditure commitments, and deliver on its corporate priorities, within the anticipated level of financial resources available in 2021/22, whilst maintaining financial sustainability over the longer term.

3. Legal and Governance Implications

- 3.1. The Council has a legal duty under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to set a balanced budget. This report highlights a potential budget deficit that needs to be eliminated prior to setting the 2021/22 budget in February 2021.

4. Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications

- 4.1. None.

5. Consultation Undertaken

- 5.1. None.

Draft Budget Proposals 2021/22 (General Fund)

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The updated Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2021/22 to 2025/26 – which set the framework for developing draft 2021/22 budget proposals for the General Fund – was adopted by Cabinet on 16th November 2020.
- 1.2 The projection for 2021/22 in the MTFP revealed an underlying budget deficit of £4.1 million on the General Fund, which had emerged in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic. It would be an extremely challenging task to eliminate a budget deficit of that size at such short notice. The MTFP therefore included an assumption that Government support of £1.0 million would be received in 2021/22. In addition, it was also assumed that the Council would utilise £1.0 million of its contingency reserves. The target reduction in the base budget for 2021/22 was therefore £2.1 million.
- 1.3 Since the agreement of the MTFP, the following processes have been undertaken:
 - The financial assumptions made in the MTFP have been reviewed to ensure that they remain relevant
 - Subsequent developments – with financial consequences – that have emerged since the MTFP was prepared, have been incorporated; most notably the Government Spending Review 2020 announced by the Chancellor on 25th November 2020
 - A detailed review of other income and expenditure pressures and priorities has been undertaken to ensure that service budget targets are achievable and in accordance with the MTFP; and
 - Initial draft budgets have been prepared.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet, an initial draft budget for the 2021/22 General Fund, for consideration, prior to scrutiny by the Stronger Council Select Committee on 19th January 2021.
- 1.5 Members are reminded that the budget presented is very much an early draft given the exceptional circumstances and uncertainty currently faced due to the pandemic, which means that information is constantly emerging and frequently changing. Therefore, adjustments can be expected as further information becomes available in the coming weeks. In particular, the Local Government Settlement for 2021/22 – which follows on from the Spending Review – is expected to be announced during the week commencing 14th December 2020, which misses the deadline for preparing this report.

2. General Fund Budget Preparation 2021/22

- 2.1 The MTFP adopted by the Cabinet in November 2020 has been followed, with detailed preparatory work now nearing completion. It is now possible to report that an early draft balanced budget has been achieved. The table below provides a high-level corporate summary of how the General Fund base budget has transitioned from 2020/21 through to a balanced position for 2021/22, following the identification of the deficit in November.

2021/22 General Fund Budget Evolution				
Description	2020/21 Budget	2021/22 MTFP (Nov 20)	2021/22 Draft Budget (Dec 20)	Variance (to MTFS)
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Employees	21,853	22,787	23,019	232
Premises	3,589	3,471	2,879	(592)
Transport	575	460	362	(98)
Supplies & Services	8,587	9,213	9,781	568
Support Services	38	38	51	13
Contracted Services	6,415	6,431	6,384	(47)
Transfer Payments (H Bens)	29,532	27,170	25,405	(1,765)
Financing Costs	1,858	2,405	2,480	75
Gross Expenditure	72,447	71,975	70,361	(1,614)
Fees and Charges	(14,808)	(13,766)	(15,561)	(1,795)
Government Contributions	(31,985)	(29,599)	(27,974)	1,625
Misc. Income (inc. Qualis)	(3,964)	(3,488)	(3,358)	130
Other Contributions	(3,078)	(3,078)	(2,974)	104
HRA Recharges	(2,642)	(2,700)	(3,155)	(455)
Net Expenditure	15,970	19,344	17,339	(2,005)
Council Tax	(8,344)	(8,568)	(8,506)	62
Business Rates	(5,255)	(5,470)	(5,535)	(65)
Collection Fund Adjustments	(896)	377	424	47
Council Tax Sharing Agreement (CTSA)	(670)	(500)	(450)	50
New Homes Bonus	(1,077)	(1,061)	(1,061)	0
Other Grants (Non-Specific)	(12)	(12)	(12)	0
Gov Support for Covid-19	0	(1,000)	(1,200)	(200)
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	284	(1,000)	(999)	1
Total Funding	(15,970)	(17,234)	(17,339)	(105)
(Surplus)/Deficit	0	2,110	0	(2,110)

2.2 In preparing the detailed budget – as is normal – a range of variances compared to the MTFP have been identified. The following discussion picks out the highlights for Expenditure, Income and Funding:

EXPENDITURE HIGHLIGHTS

- **Employees (£23.019 million)** – the increased cost of Employees compared to the 2020/21 budget and the November MTFP is the most significant variance. The MTFP was modelled based on the assumption of a 3% pay award. However, the Spending Review 2020 included a Public Sector Pay Freeze. In the circumstances, a revised assumption of a 1.5% pay award has been assumed at this stage. This had the effect of reducing anticipated budget demand by over £300,000. However, the subsequent work on the budget since the November Cabinet has entailed a ‘deep dive’ into the Council’s Establishment List and further analysis on budget coding in the Financial Management System. This work identified several anomalies, most of which were of relatively small value and have been addressed in the budget presented. However, the most significant item identified was the Council’s obligation to make a Pension Fund Deficit Reduction Payment (DRP) of £601,691 in 2021/22. The payment was known about and the marginal impact included in the MTFP. But complex local accounting arrangements for Pensions (under “IAS19”) includes – in budgetary terms – the separation of ‘routine’ (monthly) Pension contributions and DRPs. In substance, the budget for the DRP payment has not previously been included in the main General Fund budget for Management Accounts purposes, with payments being absorbed within year-end notional accounting adjustments. The inclusion of the DRP payment in Employee costs above introduces greater transparency and draws a clear distinction between genuine cash transactions and notional accounting adjustments. It should be noted that the HRA will meet an estimated £109,933 of the overall DRP payment (therefore net cost to General Fund is £491,758).
- **Premises (£2.879 million)** – the MTFP included a broad assumption that Premises costs could be reduced by at least 10% in the light of new working arrangements (escalated by the pandemic) and the reopening of the refurbished Civic Offices. However, detailed work on the budget has identified opportunities to exceed the 10% assumption across a range of costs including utilities and Business Rates. New ways of working have also enabled a significant reduction in Transport costs.
- **Supplies & Services (£9.781 million)** – the Council has been consistently underspending on Supplies and Services in recent years, which at first sight seemed to indicate a relatively easy opportunity to secure savings. However, the most significant underspending has occurred on ring-fenced budgets (e.g. on the Local Plan), which have been rolled forward. As noted in the November MTFP, a limited number of growth items have been included, such as the increased cost pressures on IT budgets as the Council moves its IT systems onto “the Cloud”, additional contributions towards Neighbourhood Police and additional commitments to Environmental Projects. However, the largest single variance relates to Insurance costs. The budget coding analysis in the Financial Management System referred to above, also identified the need to bring the Council’s insurance premium within the main General Fund budget; it has previously been accounted for in a separate holding account and does not appear in the Budget Book. The inclusion of the insurance premium in Supplies and Services will reduce accounting complexity and improve transparency in 2021/22. A total of £826,330 has been included in the General Fund budget for the insurance premium (although it should be noted that the Housing Revenue Account is expected to meet approximately £355,000 of the cost i.e. net cost to General Fund circa £471,000).

- **Transfer Payments (£25.405 million)** – Housing Benefit related budgets have now been reviewed in detail by the Housing Benefits Team based on latest ‘industry intelligence’. This has resulted in a significant reduction in the estimated value of Benefits to be paid in 2021/22. However, it should be noted that this is offset by a reduction in the amount Subsidy re-claimed from the DWP (under “Government Contributions”).
- **Financing Costs (£2.480 million)** – a further review of financing costs has not identified any need to significantly change the assumptions made in the MTFP at this stage, with the only difference being the inclusion of the estimated borrowing costs of a £10 million Development Loan to Qualis (assumed to occur midway through the financial year). Further work on financing costs – including the 2021/22 impacts of the joint Museum and Library project at Waltham Abbey – will be undertaken in January 2021 with the assistance of the Council’s Treasury Management advisors, Arlingclose.

INCOME HIGHLIGHTS

- **Fees and Charges (£15.561 million)** – detailed work on the income assumptions from Fees and Charges has been completed. No increases in Car Parking charges are assumed, with other assumed inflationary increases relatively modest (many are constrained by statute). However, there have been a range of significant positive developments to report on Fees and Charges. Most notably:
 - **North Weald Rental Income (impact £694,000)** – updated leasing arrangements recently agreed with HMRC at North Weald Airfield have been assumed to yield an additional £694,000 in 2021/22
 - **Leisure Management Fee (impact £500,000)** – the MTFP had assumed that the Council would lose 100% of the Leisure Management Fee (£1,471,420) for 2021/22. However, that was an assumption made before the announcement of the vaccine for Covid-19. It is now possible to make a slightly more optimistic assumption; accordingly, a Management Fee of £500,000 has been assumed (compared to the full Fee of £1,471,420)
 - **Planning Fees (impact £361,924)** – a detailed review of anticipated income from Planning Fees in 2021/22 (taking account of the vaccine, the lifting of the current restrictions by Natural England and the expected adoption of the Local Plan by Summer 2021) has now concluded that income assumptions compared to the MTFP can be increased; and
 - **Civic Offices Sub-Let (impact £250,000)** – net income of £250,000 is assumed from the letting of spare capacity within the newly refurbished Civic Offices. The Second Floor is actively being marketed with strong interest being shown from potentially suitable tenants.
- **HRA Recharges (£3.155 million)** – the budget assumption for HRA Recharges has risen by £455,000 compared to the MTFP, mainly driven by the technical adjustments for Pensions (impact £109,933) and Insurance (impact £355,000) noted above.

FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS

- **Council Tax (£8.506 million)** – the Council Tax Base for 2021/22 has now been determined and the preceptors have been notified. Whilst the MTFP did anticipate a reduction in the Tax Base due to Covid-19, the eventual impact – due in part to the second lockdown – was slightly greater than expected. There were a larger number of Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) cases than previously forecast and the anticipated collection rate was further reduced from 98.0% to 97.5%. The assumed Council Tax increase of £5 for a Band D property currently remains unchanged from the MTFP.
- **Business Rates (£5.535 million)** – the Business Rates calculation has been updated to reflect the “Academy” (Revenues) system figures at 30th November 2020, which yields a marginal improvement, although this budget will not be fixed until the Council has prepared its detailed Business Rates forecast (the “NNDR1” return) for 2021/22 (due 31st January 2021). It should be noted that, at the time of preparing this report, there is still significant uncertainty surrounding Business Rates for 2021/22, including the Government’s plans for Reliefs.
- **Council Tax Sharing Agreement (CTSA) (£0.450 million)** – there is still great uncertainty as to how much the Council might receive from the CTSA in 2021/22. However, emerging intelligence suggests that it would be prudent to further reduce the expectation (of £500,000) included in the MTFP (which itself was a reduction of £169,780 from the budgeted payments for 2020/21).
- **New Homes Bonus (NHB) (£1.061 million)** – the Spending Review 2020 confirmed that the NHB would continue in 2021/22. However, it also confirmed that there will be no further legacy payments. This means that the Council will not be receiving the £609,000 payment that it received in 2020/21 as originally assumed in the MTFP. However, it was also confirmed that councils will receive a new award for 2021/22; this was not assumed in the MTFP. Further information is awaited at the time of preparing this report. In the circumstances the MTFP estimate remains unaltered, although Members should note that this is a key risk area; the actual 2021/22 award could go up or down.
- **Government Support for Covid-19 (£1.200 million)** – the assumption regarding the level of Government support in 2021/22 has been raised by £200,000 compared to the MTFP. Although further details are awaited, the Spending Review announcement did contain some encouraging messages, including:
 - £1.55 billion nationally to cover Covid-19 related expenditure costs for Quarter 1 in 2021/22
 - The extension of the Sales, Fees and Charges (SFC) scheme for Quarter 1 of 2021/22 (75% reimbursement with a 5% disregard)
 - £670 million nationally to support LCTS (this is for extra costs from increased take-up referred to above regarding the Council Tax Base); and
 - Additional support for Collection Fund losses (75% of irrecoverable losses).
- **Contribution from Reserves (£0.999 million)** – the combined impacted of the initial draft budget for 2021/22, would result in a contribution of £0.999 from General Fund unallocated reserves; this is just within the parameter of £1.0 million set by Cabinet on 16th November 2020.

3. General Fund Budget Setting 2021/22: The Way Forward

- 3.1. The draft budget will now be presented to the Stronger Council Select Committee on 19th January 2021/22 for their consideration and comment ahead of the February Cabinet meeting.
- 3.2. Alongside the scrutiny process, officers will further refine the assumptions and projections in the budget accordance with the direction provided by Cabinet and emerging intelligence, including the imminent Local Government Settlement for 2021/22.

ANNEX 1												
General Fund Budget Summary 2021/22 (DRAFT)												
	Chief Executive	Community & Wellbeing	Contracts & Technical	Corporate Services	Customer Services	Economic Projects	Finance & Audit	Housing & Property	Planning & Development	Strategy, Delivery & Performance	Unallocated Adjustments	General fund Total
	£s	£s	£s	£s	£s	£s	£s	£s	£s	£s	£s	£s
Employee Expenses	519,280	1,285,025	3,735,319	4,352,415	3,739,004	1,280,370	1,119,640	867,260	4,551,943	967,010	601,692	23,018,958
Premises Related Expenses	510	446,460	1,016,220	3,770	0	18,220	290	1,211,120	182,550			2,879,140
Transport Related Expenses	6,240	20,250	254,860	12,420	12,310	17,460	7,110	11,850	15,280	3,740		361,520
Supplies and Services	289,280	590,950	1,177,200	3,447,880	314,270	227,510	419,570	52,620	2,504,350	757,210		9,780,740
Support Services		4,350	7,130	19,200	4,510	3,250	120	1,890	10,800			51,250
Contracted Services			6,341,070			1,020		6,030	36,040			6,384,160
Transfer Payments					25,405,300							25,405,300
Financing Costs						2,480,000						2,480,000
Total Expenditure	815,310	2,346,935	12,531,791	7,835,685	29,475,394	1,547,830	4,026,730	2,150,770	7,300,963	1,727,980	601,692	70,361,068
Fees & Charges		-394,680	-11,910,780	-227,200		-5,780	-35,870	-275,000	-2,708,940	-2,660		-15,560,910
Government Contributions		-472,200			-26,633,780	-10,270			-658,410			-27,974,660
Misc Income		-260	-2,060	-67,160	-212,100	-3,058,990		-17,250				-3,357,620
Other Contributions		-255,940	-2,142,800	-4,000	-128,510	-131,000	-1,330	-2,300	-307,820			-2,973,890
HRA Recharges											-3,155,133	-3,155,133
Total Income	0	-1,122,980	-14,055,640	-298,360	-26,974,390	-147,050	-3,096,390	-277,300	-3,892,420	-2,660	-3,155,133	-53,022,323
Net Expenditure	815,310	1,223,955	-1,523,841	7,537,325	2,501,004	1,400,780	930,340	1,873,470	3,408,543	1,725,300	-2,553,441	17,338,745

Christopher Hartgrove: Person Deficit Adjustment

Christopher Hartgrove: HRA Recharges (including Person Deficit Adjustment £109,933)

Draft Budget Proposals 2021/22 (Housing Revenue Account)

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Council has a statutory duty to maintain a ring-fenced Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This includes a duty to maintain the financial sustainability of the HRA. To this end, in accordance with the HRA Subsidy Determination 2011/12, the Council maintains a 30-Year Business Plan, which sets the framework for the annual budget setting process.
- 1.2 The Council agreed it's Housing Revenue Account budget for 2020/21 in February 2020 and is summarised below.

Housing Revenue Account Budget 2020/21 <i>(adopted by Council 25/02/20)</i>	
Description	Amount £000's
EXPENDITURE	
Supervision & Management (General)	7,023
Supervision & Management (Special)	3,665
Rents, Rates Taxes and Insurances	520
Contributions to Repairs Fund	6,000
Management & Maintenance	17,208
Capital Charges	8,078
Major Repairs on Leasehold Properties	306
Treasury Management Expenses	57
Provision for Bad/Doubtful Debts	70
Total Expenditure	25,719
INCOME	
Gross Rent from Dwellings	(31,997)
Non-Dwellings Rents	(831)
Charges for Services & Facilities	(1,834)
Contributions from General Fund	(350)
Total Income	(35,012)
Net Cost of Services	(9,293)
Interest on Receipts and Balances	(378)
Interest Payable on Loans	5,668
Transfer from Major Repairs Reserve	0
Reversal of Repairs Service Depreciation	(66)
Pensions Interest Payable/Return on Assets	640
Net Operating Income	(3,430)
<i>Appropriations:</i>	
Direct Revenue Contributions to Capital	4,430
IAS19 Adjustment	(1,160)
Transfer to Self-Financing Reserve	130
(Surplus)/Deficit for Year	(30)

- 1.3 The table shows that the strategy embedded within the 2020/21 HRA budget was to achieve a small *surplus* of £30,000 and add this to an anticipated HRA contingency balance of £2.321 million assumed as at 31st March 2020. This would comfortably meet the commitment within the 30-Year Business Plan to maintain a minimum contingency balance of £2.0 million. However, the eventual outturn for 2019/20 resulted in an HRA loss, which reduced the contingency reserve to £2.030 million. This means that any significant loss in 2020/21 could potentially breach the minimum contingency balance.
- 1.4 An updated forecast was completed at the end of November, which indicated that the Council is broadly on course with the 2020/21 budget, with just a very small *deficit* of £30,000 expected. There are two major variances that effectively cancel each other out:
- Gross Rent from Dwellings (£610,000) – based on the latest available information from the Housing Rents system, a surplus of £610,000 is forecast on income from Dwellings compared to budget; however
 - Capital Charges (£599,000) – based on a review of the Fixed Asset Register, an overspend of £599,000 is expected on Capital Charges. This is due to a deficient Depreciation budget and is the same problem encountered in 2019/20 (the 2020/21 was already set by the time the issue had been identified).
- 1.5 In preparing a draft framework for the 2021/22 HRA budget within the parameters set by the 30-Year Business Plan, the following factors have been considered:
- The HRA forecast outturn for 2020/21 (as highlighted above)
 - An assumed increase in Rent of 1.5% (September 2020 CPI + 1%; in accordance with the Rent Standard 2020)
 - An assumed increase in Fees and Charges of 2.5%
 - Other inflationary assumptions consistent with those used in preparing the 2021/22 draft General Fund budget
 - The emerging Capital Programme for 2021/22; and
 - Any other local intelligence (e.g. consequent to the transfer of the Housing Repairs service with effect from 1st October 2020).
- 1.6 The detailed budget preparation phase for the HRA will conclude in early January 2021 with the results immediately progressing through the scrutiny process and then back to Cabinet in February 2021. However, the framework within which the budget will be prepared is presented in the table below for Members attention. There are no major changes expected at this stage compared to 2020/21, although – in the light of recent experience (presented above) – Income from Dwellings has been raised, which helps to fund the additional Capital Charges expected. It should also be noted that the annual Contribution to the Repairs Fund is assumed to increase from £6.0 million to £6.5 million as expenditure from the Fund has consistently outstripped contributions in recent years. Finally, a small projected HRA surplus of £62,000 would ensure that the Council retains the minimum contingency balance in accordance with the 30-Year Business Plan.

Housing Revenue Account Budget 2021/22 <i>(outline framework)</i>	
Description	Amount £000's
EXPENDITURE	
Supervision & Management (General)	7,203
Supervision & Management (Special)	3,738
Rents, Rates Taxes and Insurances	533
Contributions to Repairs Fund	6,500
Management & Maintenance	17,974
Capital Charges	8,850
Major Repairs on Leasehold Properties	300
Treasury Management Expenses	58
Provision for Bad/Doubtful Debts	91
Total Expenditure	27,274
INCOME	
Gross Rent from Dwellings	(33,346)
Non-Dwellings Rents	(810)
Charges for Services & Facilities	(2,492)
Contributions from General Fund	(357)
Total Income	(37,005)
Net Cost of Services	(9,731)
Interest on Receipts and Balances	(23)
Interest Payable on Loans	5,638
Transfer from Major Repairs Reserve	0
Reversal of Repairs Service Depreciation	(68)
Pensions Interest Payable/Return on Assets	652
Net Operating Income	(3,531)
<i>Appropriations:</i>	
Direct Revenue Contributions to Capital	4,652
IAS19 Adjustment	(1,183)
Transfer to Self-Financing Reserve	0
(Surplus)/Deficit for Year	(62)



Report to Stronger Council Committee

Date of meeting: 19th January 2020

Portfolio: Leader (Councillor C Whitbread)

Subject: Accommodation update

Officer contact for further information: Louise Wade (lwade@eppingforestdc.gov.uk/ 01992 642311)

Democratic Services Officer: Adrian Hendry (01992 564246)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the Committee note the summary of progress on the Accommodation Programme as at 06th January when this report was written and any verbal updates.

Executive Summary

Construction works and fixtures and fittings continue to be on time, orders have now been placed with the first delivery taking place in January. Minor amendments have been made to the ground floor space to enable a large PACE room to be available impacting the consultation space. This is not assumed to be a problem as there is available space within other parts of the building.

Requirements for the desk and car park system are now complete and configuration of the IT system that will manage this have now commenced.

One of the "Travel to the Civic" options for employees and residents is the DRT. This was launched in January and there has already been a positive take up for the service with residents which we hope to extend to employee usage. This pilot will be closely monitored, as it is recognised that this will be taking place at a time when the civic is not open and needs to consider the needs of the employees of the council.

A focus on the change management and communication effort has continued through this period, with members briefings, managers briefings and employee briefings all taking place. Feedback from employees has been positive and individuals were "excited" and felt it looked "elegant and 21st Century". Individual sessions have been taking place with teams and there has been a big focus on decluttering. With a "Scan it, Scrap it, Store it, Stop it" campaign, we have been keen to ensure we only retain what is necessary and also recognise that files can be retained in digital form. One of the biggest areas of opportunity was business support where they disposed of 95 boxes in one day alone and there have been donations to schools and charities for unused and unwanted items.

Commercialisation of the 2nd floor is now live. We will be looking to review the interest and opportunities for this space at the end of January. Talks continue with partners in terms of how they would use the Civic and this also extends to other partners that will be using touchdown space in the community hub. We had intended to complete discussions with partners by the end of December and we are now hoping to conclude by end of Q4.

Due to the current lockdown, we will be closely reviewing the plan and understanding any impact this may have on the fit out of the building and the co-ordination of both external and internal resources that will need to install equipment.

The refurbishment continues to be within the agreed budget and is forecasting a positive variance of £106,066.

Reason for decision: No decision required.

Legal and Governance Implications:

There are no legal or governance implications arising from the recommendations of this report. However, any implications arising from actions to achieve specific objectives or benefits will be identified by the responsible Service Director.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the Safer, Cleaner and Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues with the district. Relevant implications arising from actions to achieve specific objectives or benefits will be identified by the responsible Service Director.

Consultation Undertaken:

Programme updates provided to:
Leadership Team
Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Stronger Council Select committee

Background Papers:

Risk Management:

There are no risk management issues arising from this report. Relevant issues arising from re-planning or actions to achieve specific objectives or benefits will be identified by the responsible service director and communicated to the Corporate Risk Management Group.



Report to Stronger Council Select Committee

Date of meeting: 19th January 2021

Portfolio: Leader (Councillor C Whitbread)

Subject: Corporate Performance Reporting – Q3

Officer contact for further information:

Louise Wade (lwade@eppingforestdc.gov.uk/ 01992 642311)

Democratic Services Officer: Adrian Hendry (01992 564246)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

Report:

1. That the committee reviews the report and notes the progress of project delivery against Q3 milestones, specifically the projects currently highlighting exceptions as follows:

- a. Customer Excellence Programme: Fix the basics
- b. Customer Excellence Programme: Digital Customer Journey
- c. Customer Excellence Programme: Digital Payments
- d. Community & Data Insights Programme: Research and Feasibility recommendations
- e. People Programme: Attracting, On Boarding and retaining the best talent
- f. IT Programme: Infrastructure Review
- g. IT Programme: Business Application Review
- h. Accommodation Programme
- i. Council Housebuilding and Housing Programme: Council Housebuilding
- j. Council Housebuilding and Housing Programme: Sheltered housing review
- k. District Sustainability: Implementation of Green Infrastructure Strategy
- l. Planning and Development Programme: Local Plan
- m. Economic Development: Digital Enablement and Gateway
- n. Town Centre Development: Leisure contract

2. That the committee reviews the report and notes the quarterly KPIs. Estimates are provided where actuals were not yet received, specifically highlighting exceptions as follows:

- a. Stronger Places: Rent Arrears
- b. Stronger Council: Diversity & Inclusion - % of workforce by Ethnicity
- c. Stronger Council: Diversity & Inclusion - % of workforce with disability
- d. Stronger Council: Sickness Absence

Reason for decision: To enable Select committee to review progress for quarterly performance measurement delivery

Options considered and rejected: Not applicable.

Resource implications: Relevant resource implications as part of the delivery of the project and will be addressed accordingly by the service Director/and or project leads.

Legal and Governance Implications: There are no legal or governance implications arising from the recommendations of this report. However, any implications arising from actions to achieve specific objectives or benefits will be identified by the responsible Service Director and/or project leads.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications: There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the Safer, Cleaner and Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues with the district. Relevant implications arising from actions to achieve specific objectives or benefits will be identified by the responsible Service Director and/or project leads.

Consultation Undertaken:

Leadership Team
Service Directors




Background Papers: Strategy and Corporate plan



Impact Assessments: Impact of status has been assessed and relevant mitigation or response is in place for projects.


Risk Management: Any major risks from programme will be reported via the Corporate Risk Management group which is reported at Audit and Governance Committee.

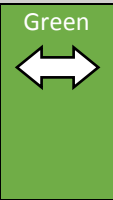




Equality: Relevant equality implications arising from actions to achieve specific objects or benefits will be identified by the responsible service director and/or project leads.


2. Corporate plan programmes scope and performance measurement report



Community Health and Wellbeing Programme		Lead Officer: Jen Gould	
Wider Determinants of Health Improvement			
Goal	Aspirational milestones	Status	Q3 Progress
<p>Delivery of activities that contribute to an overall reduction in health deprivation in the pilot wards.</p> <p>A tested place-based approach that can be replicated to respond to the health inequality needs of other areas.</p>	<p><u>Q3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of Community consultation in pilot wards to gather qualitative insight into residents' needs Health and Wellbeing Board approval of multi agency group action plans outlining key activities to address needs of pilot areas 	<p>Green</p> 	<p>Q3 milestones completed. Next milestones for FY21/22 are on track.</p>
Museum Collection Rationalisation			
<p>Rationalise the collection to make more improve the collections available making more accessible for local community, and efficient and effective use of storage.</p>	<p><u>Q4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop high level Action Plan for programme of work over 3 years 	<p>Green</p> 	<p>On track and on target.</p>
Private Sector Lettings			
<p>To provide suitable and affordable accommodation to those people who are experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>To utilise the scheme as a prevention tool</p> <p>To reduce the use and cost of temporary accommodation</p> <p>To effectively and lawfully discharge homelessness duties</p>	<p><u>Q2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment to Private Sectors Letting Officer <p><u>Q4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure a minimum of 65 private sector lets Create and market a private sector letting offer to attract landlords 	<p>Amber</p> 	<p>A PRS scheme is being delivered and number of lets are currently comparable with monthly target, but previous months numbers have been impacted by COVID, as well as risk to numbers due to tier 4 restrictions, affecting the overall target of 65.</p> <p>Due to project resourcing issue & realignment of priorities we are pausing work on creating on a marketable scheme & will revisit the priority progressing this piece of work should have in Jan/Feb '21.</p>




Telecare offering			
Cessation of the delivery of Telecare and move to ECC country-wide care provision of technology service for telecare and assistive technology delivery.	<u>To be rebaselined in line with ECC timelines.</u>	Green 	ECC withdrew original tender and have since rescoped the service request which was originally to be ceased by Q3 2020. Mobilisation of an Essex wide telecare service is now expected between April – June 2021. Update to Cabinet delivered on new timescales for ECC procurement & intention of EFDC to cease telecare offer by end of 1st quarter of 21/22 at a net cost to GF of around £7K.
Locata			
Integrating available functionality of current LOCATA system across the Homelessness, Temporary Accommodation and Rehousing Team. Upgrading system functionality and allowing customers to access all areas of housing in real time and have autonomy over their housing applications.	<u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Phase 1 – Integration of current system functionality ▪ Phase 2 - specification and procurement 	Green 	New project. Phase 1 is on track and progressing well. Phase 2 has a minor risk awaiting Consortium decision on proceeding with the Locata upgrade which otherwise could impact funding.






Customer Excellence Programme			
Fix The basics			
Goal	Aspirational milestones	Status	Progress
Improvement of essential customer service processes and operations to improve the effectiveness of the function and service delivered to customer and providing a solid foundation	<u>Q2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ICS Benchmark survey ▪ Customer Feedback channel created through social media ▪ Out of hours new contract procurement <u>Q3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Customer Feedback review ▪ CHW 1st line migration to contact centre <u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contact centre Operating Hours review 	Red 	<p>The complaints process has been updated to reflect comments from the Ombudsman. the contact us e-mail address has been removed and a new general enquiry for created signposting customers more effectively.</p> <p>Reason for RAG Status: Community Health & Wellbeing 1st line migration aspect outstanding.</p> <p>Route to Green: Full migration of CHW into the Customer Team will be completed with the new visitor booking system, due end of Q4.</p>



Customer Culture Development (Customer shoes culture)			
Improve the way we interact and respond to customers by improving the behaviours of interaction through training and recognition	<u>Q3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Shoes Behavioural training pilot <u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training Plan 	Green 	The customer shoes behavioural training has commenced and received positive feedback. A customer shoes knowledge hub is being created for all staff. The customer shoes behavioural training pilot is complete. The Customer Service Superstar initiative was a great success recognising staff providing great customer service and will be repeated quarterly.
Digital Customer Journey (Embracing new technology)			
Increase the digitisation of the customer journey	<u>Q3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firm Step Calendar bookings <u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer single Sign on 	Red 	Customer service accommodation project costings now budgeted for. Reason for RAG Status: Firm Step Calendar Bookings delayed. Route to Green: Expected by Q4.
Digital Members Journey (Members)			
Improve the Members experience as a customer	<u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Portal 	Amber 	A review of Members technology requirements is underway to ensure the tools provided are fit for purpose and meet Member's needs. A working group has been set up and recommendations for the objectives and scope of this project will be provided in due course. Requirements will then be assessed against resource availability and prioritised accordingly.
Partnership Hub			
Making services available to those unable to access technology or looking to access services in person	<u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-Agency hub launch 	Blue 	Completed.
Digital Payments			
Refresh payment component of customer journey	<u>Q3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wallet and Recurring payment launch PCI DSS compliance project (Payment industry Compliancy to protection of income through payments) 	Red 	Reason for RAG: PCI DSS compliance enhancements are delay due to resource constraints. It is noted that we are compliant and these enhancements are to further improve the security. Route to Green: Completion in next quarter.


Community and Data Insights Programme		Lead Officer: Rob Pavey	
Research & Feasibility Recommendations			
Goal	Aspirational milestones	Status	Progress
Provide insight for the future design of our service based on data and behavioural analysis Provide customer-centric services	<u>Q3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Corporate objectives for Community Data Insight objectives Provide Options for Data analysis tools 	Red 	Reason for RAG Status: The council is currently reviewing the priority of this programme against other initiatives. Programme may then require further clarity on its scope. Route to Green: Aim to establish objectives by Q4.


People Programme		Lead Officer: Paula Maginnis	
High Performing and Flexible Workforce			
Goal	Aspirational milestones	Status	Progress
Creating a culture of collaboration, innovation and creativity	<u>Q3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational alignment to delivery <u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Performance Management Review and implementation New automated recruitment process through iRecruit 	Green 	Redesign of new 'Inspiring great performance' 'HWAID' underway. Guidance tools are also being created. Early engagement sessions with SLT, SD's will happen early January 2021.
Attracting, On Boarding and retaining the best talent			
Creating a strong people brand that is inspiring and motivating harnessing technology and social media platforms	<u>Q3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onboarding process, redesign and roll out 	Red 	Recruitment through iTrent - Engagement session completed for Leadership on 7th December 2020. People Team on track to launch Phase 1 by 6 Jan 2021. Comms have been implemented and our careers page redesign is complete. Reason for RAG Status: Onboarding process, redesign and rollout intended to complete in Q3. Route to Green: The Onboarding guide is designed, feedback is being included and guide amended. We now expect the guide to be completed Q4. Pilot this to new starters in January 2021. We are also piloting the 'HR Power Hour', this included the employee lifecycle journey. We are piloting this with the newly recruited managers




Engagement and Wellbeing			
Creating a working environment where employees wellbeing is an integral part, and organisational decisions taking into account the impact on employees.	<p><u>Q2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mental Health Line manager training delivered ▪ Perkbox – Integrated EAP and Wellbeing Platform <p><u>Q3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perkbox – Integrated engagement platform <p><u>Q4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perkbox – Integrated recognition platform ▪ 1/10 trained in Mental Health 	Green 	Perkbox recognition launched in December. We are now looking at a private medical salary sacrifice scheme (Bupa) for January 2021. Mental Health training on track, we have 34 MHFA Aiders in the organisation so far, 3 cohorts still to go pre target date of 1 in 10 by Feb 2021.
Internal Policy and Process improvement			
Continuous improvement of the council's people management policies, processes and procedures and function	<p><u>Q2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People Team restructure <p><u>Q4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Automate people management by moving to digital processes ▪ People policy review / refresh 	Green 	Dependency on Intranet to allow full digital integration. Currently using workarounds using excel format and iTrent ESS, MSS to host easier links to common HR requirements. Reviewing HR efficiencies to look at processes that can be digitally enabled and embedded within HR. Adobe sign is now fully integrated and used with HR department.
Developing Our Skills and Behaviours			
Develop a core set of leadership and management competencies which underpin the skills, qualities and behaviours of EFDC future leader vision.	TBC	Green 	Learning Strategy launched to SLT, SD. SM on Monday 23rd November. Feedback very positive. Launch to TM's and organisation will be by end of Dec 2020. Leadership and Management development program has been designed and engagement sessions start Jan 2021 post sign off from Andrew at OD Meeting.




ICT Strategy Programme		Lead Officer: Paula Maginnis	
ICT restructure			
Goal	Aspirational milestones	Status	Progress
Reorganise ICT team to provide cross functional skills required to support delivery of projects Reduce overall headcount	<u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Restructure 	Amber 	The restructure continues with 10 vacancies still in the team. Short term resource has been brought in to cover the service desk and specialist skills such as M3 and GIS. The external recruitment process has started, but early responses are poor. Further short-term resource will be required to cover roles.
Service Management (Service Desk tool/Process)			
Replace old system(HOTH), with simplified SaaS. Improve Service processes and overall service internal provision	<u>Q2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1 – system implementation <u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 2 – Process improvement and migration of old system 	Green 	A new Customer Information Guide was produced for service managers to clarify the new SLAs and escalation process. The new Major Incident Management process was presented to the leadership team and is working well.
Flexible and Remote Working			
Enable employees to work flexibly and remotely	<u>Q2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teams Rollout Laptop standards issued <u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> O365 rollout complete Govroam (Wifi roaming in public sector locations) complete 	Amber 	O365 on hold until to Feb due to current application upgrades. Govroam to take place following Accommodation works completion in Feb / March.
Device, Desktop and Laptop Strategy			
Support versions of OS in use. Single remote access solution Single team to deliver new devices	<u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish action plan 	Amber 	This work has started as part of infrastructure tidy up, but is not progressing at planned rate due to overall resourcing issues in the team.
Mobile Phone Review			
Reduce mobile phone ownership and usage	<u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment and strategy complete 	Amber 	Although work has started on this, it is not being directly managed due to resourcing issues in the new mobile team. We should consider using a PM to assist with this work.



Infrastructure Review			
<p>Refresh our disaster recovery capability and improve network resilience</p>	<p><u>Q2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DR infrastructure installed <p><u>Q3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Infrastructure testing complete <p><u>Q4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Further Infrastructure strategy action plan complete 	<p>Red</p> 	<p>Reason for RAG Status: Disaster Recovery is not progressing at planned rate due to overall resourcing issues in the team.</p> <p>Return to Green: We expect to be able to put resource on this in Q4.</p>
Business Application Review			
<p>Understand all applications Identify unsupported ones Implement supplier mgt Decommission out of date / used systems Move applications to SaaS Blueprint for future applications</p>	<p><u>Q2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business Architecture current state ▪ Business Partner model implemented <p><u>Q3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supplier management process implemented <p><u>Q4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategy and plan for business application architecture 	<p>Red</p> 	<p>Reason for RAG Status: Work on the supplier management process has started but is not progressing at planned rate due to overall resourcing issues in the team.</p> <p>Return to Green: Consulting third parties for support in the business app strategy.</p>



Accommodation Programme		Lead Officer: Louise Wade	
Goal	Aspirational milestones	Status	Progress
<p>Accommodation Strategy: programme A range of projects to improve the design & development of the Councils buildings & assets and the way in which employees work</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refurbishment works 2. Infrastructure and Technology 3. Travel Plan 4. Furniture, fixtures and fittings 5. Change & Ways of Working 6. Partners and Commercial opportunities 7. Customer Service Workstream 	<p><u>Q2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agree FFF schedule, furniture and place order ▪ AV Design complete ▪ Complete proposed travel plan <p><u>Q3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procurement tender on printing project commenced. ▪ Ascertain final agreement on lease/rental fees for 3rd parties ▪ Ways of working and members workshops held <p><u>Q4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refurbishment work complete in 323 & Civic ▪ Complete FF&E,AV, Desktop and IT Installation 	<p>Red</p> 	<p>Refurbishment continues to progress on time and budget; Negotiations continue with partners. Community Hub vision agreed at cabinet in December. Travel policy drafted and DRT pilot will provide indication of additional mode of transport to Civic. High level of engagement with stakeholders include employee and members stakeholder information sessions.</p> <p>Reason for RAG Status: The intention was to conclude discussions with partners by year end.</p> <p>Route to Green: Conclude in January/February. There has been extensive space planning to accommodate all requirements. We are currently finalising the offer to the library and will look to issue this in January.</p>




Housing Programme		Lead Officer: Deborah Fenton	
Council Housebuilding			
Goal	Aspirational milestones	Status	Progress
To deliver the Council housebuilding programme	<p><u>Q2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On site start Phase 4.1 <p><u>Q3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On site start Phase 4.2 ▪ Onsite start Phase 4.3 <p><u>Q4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Onsite start Phase 4.4 	<p>Red</p> 	<p>The forecast for the next 4 years has been submitted to finance, this includes a bid for the Qualis affordable housing units.</p> <p>Reason for RAG Status: C19 is causing issues on building development i.e. delayed material deliveries.</p> <p>On site start phase 4.2, now expected across 25 Jan - 11 Feb</p> <p>On site start phase 4.3, expected July 2021 due to design changes requiring planning resubmission. Tender approval for 4.3 was done via CHBCC Dec 20, contract to be signed with supplier.</p> <p>It should be noted that we are also looking at a review of the HRA strategy within the next quarter.</p> <p>Return to Green: Rebaseline Phase 4.2 and 4.3.</p>



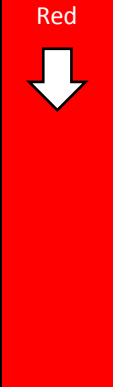
Housing and Asset Management System			
<p>Replacement of a legacy system that has reached end of life. Replacing manual processes and spreadsheet and enabling agile and mobile working. Improve the management information and improve analytics to identify improvements.</p>	<p><u>Q3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High level Requirements complete ▪ Initial tender response and evaluation complete <p><u>Q4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cabinet approval and award 	<p>Red</p> 	<p>High Level Requirements complete.</p> <p>Reason for RAG Status: Tender was delayed due to negotiating terms with partners. Awaiting tender responses to perform evaluation. Expected responses by late Jan.</p> <p>Return to Green: Conclude evaluation and tender. Rebaseline tender milestone to Q4.</p>
Service Charge Review			
<p>Develop a fair charging regime which mirrors the costs to the District for carrying out services for communal areas in tenanted blocks. Work with communities to identify where investment can be made within our estates.</p>	<p><u>Q2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cabinet approval of service charges review <p><u>Q3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish initial service charge regime ▪ Present to Cabinet <p><u>Q4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete charging proposals 	<p>Green</p> 	<p>On track and on target. Service charge regime agreed by cabinet. Online webinar planned in January with residents, and charges to start beginning of FY.</p>
Sheltered Housing Review			
<p>The goal is to ensure that we deliver accommodation that meets our older tenants' housing needs while making the best use of our housing stock.</p>	<p><u>Q3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wifi install in communal areas ▪ Improve Marketing and Promotion of sheltered housing <p><u>Q4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stronger Place Select committee – 3 year action plan ▪ SH impact to 55plus review 	<p>Red</p> 	<p>A pilot refurb is currently being planned for one of the schemes. Initial meetings taken place with supplier for specialist packages for sheltered housing and a pilot refurb is being planned for one housing scheme, to be approved by cabinet. Further update will be presented to select committee in the new year.</p> <p>Reason for RAG Status: Wifi plans are being removed due to being uneconomical and a need to further understand the broader view of sheltered housing needs is being considered.</p> <p>Route to Green: Consider Sheltered housing needs in Q4.</p>

District Sustainability Programme		Lead Officer: Alison Blom-Cooper / Nigel Richardson / Kim Durrani	
Climate Action Plan (Climate emergency actions)			
Goal	Aspirational milestones	Status	Progress
To be an enabler for achieving climate change ambitions of the Council of being carbon neutral by 2030 and to ensure impacts of growth in the District are mitigated.	<u>Q2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint Climate Change officer <u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet adoption of Climate Action plan 	Amber 	A follow up workshop discussion took place in December to understand priorities and further activities to explore for the Climate Action Plan. A session on sustainable transport was held with the Youth Council on 8th December with an introduction to the Climate Action Plan planned for 2nd February. Tree planting programme plan in progress and to be approved no later than Feb 2021.
Implementation of the Green Infrastructure Strategy (Strategic Alternative areas of Natural Greenspace)			
Establish strategy and policies relating to Green and Blue infrastructure, the protection of ecological assets and high quality design.	<u>Q1</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green and blue infrastructure strategy issued for consultation <u>Q3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet consideration of strategy for endorsement as a material planning consideration 	Red 	<p>Report to be submitted to Cabinet in Feb 2021.</p> <p>Reason for RAG: Decision made by Cabinet to defer.</p> <p>Route to Green: Approval at cabinet in February. Next stage after that is to take this forward and implementing the projects in the GIS. Rebaseline milestones to Q4.</p>
Travel Local (Sustainable transport)			
<p>To provide local travel options for more distant villages and towns off the underground route and thereby support local training, employment and shopping,</p> <p>To deliver an attractive and cost-effective replacement for EFDC/ECC-subsidised route 87 bus</p> <p>Provide key workers with alternatives mode of transport</p>	<u>Q2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable Transport officer appointed <u>Q3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals submitted to Cabinet <u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Pilot 	Green 	Cabinet agreed the DRT trial and budget on 3.12.20. Press releases and local Town/Parish engagement has taking place, with posters on local bus stops. Trial service commenced on 2 January 21. Monitoring of trial and assessment of viability to proceed over Jan and Feb 21 with the aim to rollout full service from April.

Planning and Development Programme		Lead Officer: Nigel Richardson/Alison Blom-Cooper	
Digital Planning Process Improvement & Digital Solution			
Goal	Aspirational milestones	Status	Progress
Deliver a digital solution and improve processes within planning department. Providing the Development Management Service with a single digital workspace to complete all tasks relating (enforcement, trees, conservation, applications, appeals, pre-application advice) and for customers to interact with us and for up to date information to be available to our customer services team and other parties regarding the DM function.	<u>Q3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tender Process complete <u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Phase 1 implementation 	Amber 	Provider identified, Planning Portfolio Holder report to be completed and signed in January 2021. Project budget still under consideration and final costs to be agreed with provider. On course to go live in September 2021.
Local Plan			
Deliver Local Plan	<u>Q3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Main Modifications consultation <u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adoption of local plan 	Red 	Reason for RAG Status: Awaiting Local Plan Inspector response and timeline to Main Modifications so that consultation can take place – now planned for Q4. Return to Green: Local Plan adoption anticipated to be in Q1 FY 21/22.

Economic Development		Lead Officer: John Houston	
Digital Enablement and Gateway			
Goal	Aspirational milestones	Status	Progress
<p>An externally provided platform for 'Place' that will re-imagine Epping Forest District as a great location to live, work and do business.</p> <p>Platform for;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On-line information 2. On-line business building 3. On-line trading programme 4. On-line community building 5. On-line transaction and settlement 6. On-line bookings 7. On-line info. re. employment and skills 	<p><u>Q2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project Initiation <p><u>Q3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Requirements, tender and Procurement complete <p><u>Q4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Phase 1 implementation 	<p>Red</p> 	<p>A rationalised digital gateway plan has been drafted.</p> <p>Reason for RAG: Further detailed analysis was required to understand the feasibility of the solution and need. The preferred option is for a digital gateway that is focused on the local economy and social benefit using tried and tested low cost technology. The product can then evolve over time and make best use of previous investment.</p> <p>Route to Green: Report is being prepared for Cabinet in January 2021.</p>
Business Zone			
<p>To create a business zone that will provide;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A substantial range of employment opportunities for people of all ages - facilities for business start-ups and sole entrepreneurs - Opportunities for companies involved in distribution and light industry 	<p><u>Q4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appraisal option completed 	<p>Green</p> 	<p>Evaluation work is in progress.</p>

Waltham Abbey Community & Cultural Hub (Feasibility on Epping forest culture and community hub)			
To develop an Epping Forest Community and Economic Hub through combining Epping Forest District Museum and Essex County Council library buildings in Sun Street, Waltham Abbey.	<u>Q2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop Options / Feasibility Study for Community & Economic Hub ▪ Present Feasibility Study to Cabinet <u>Q4</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confirm EFDC capital funding ▪ Produce/agree SLA for management of revised facilities ▪ Detailed proposal sign-off (FY21/22-Q1) 	Green 	Decision made to progress project and a marker for capital investment is included in the budget.
Local Businesses and Suppliers			
To recognise the broader economic and well-being impact of existing local businesses and attract new businesses to the area.	<u>Q2</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial draft of procurement rules focusing on local suppliers <u>Q3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agreement on rules and updating of procurement terms and tender templates ▪ Procurement strategy update to cabinet 	Green 	External support has been sourced to provide capacity to drive the project forward. Agreement on rules and updating of procurement terms and tender templates, Procurement strategy complete and training in progress.
Local skills and opportunities			
To maximise work and training opportunities to lessen the negative impact of Covid 19	<u>Q3</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scope Kick start scheme ▪ Support businesses to upskill, expand online presence 	Green 	Cabinet agreed to purchase an online platform which will support residents across the West Essex region and will be developed for the Kickstart Scheme (both for employees and businesses) and apprenticeships. The contract for the Platform has been signed and a kick-off meeting with the supplier took place on 17 December 2020. The Council, working with Harlow, will be using either a private training provider or Essex County Council to place the Kickstart participants and the West Essex Partnership will support the businesses and placements using the platform.

Town Centre Development		Lead Officer: Julie Chandler	
Town Centre Regeneration (future proofing)			
Goal	Aspirational milestones	Status	Progress
<p>To create vibrant high streets and town centres of the future across Epping Forest District</p> <p>Feasibility study which sets out opportunities and remedies for barriers in relation to High Streets in Waltham Abbey, Ongar, Loughton, Buckhurst Hill, and Epping</p>	<p><u>Q2</u> Establish feasibility study project and commence</p> <p><u>Q3</u> Feasibility for WA complete</p> <p><u>Q4</u> Presentation to cabinet</p>	<p>Green</p> 	<p>First appraisal and recommendations report for Waltham Abbey has been produced went to Cabinet in December. Recommendation approved. Ongar and Loughton to following in Q4.</p>
Waste Contract			
<p>To review the options for provision of waste, recycling collections and street cleansing services beyond the current contract term. It may be feasible to retender, enhance services or achieve efficiencies</p>	<p><u>Q2</u> Consultants appointed to support review</p> <p><u>Q3</u> Modelling of existing contract costs Options appraisal outcome</p>	<p>Green</p> 	<p>Cabinet agreed the Strategic Options for the Waste Management on 03.12.20. A meeting is planned in December with Ricardo Environmental Limited to review scope for the next phase of work which includes negotiations with Biffa and options for procurement. Initial Option appraisal completed, further detailed appraisal to be progressed.</p>
Leisure Contract			
<p>To maintain service delivery and minimise financial losses to the Council due to Covid-19</p>	<p><u>Q3</u> Assess impact of final account of the first month of opening</p>	<p>Red</p> 	<p>The Leisure Contract remains under pressure especially with the uncertainty around the lockdowns and ongoing Covid19 risk. Open Book Reconciliation is ongoing for settlement of operating accounts from March to October 2020. A separate discussion is taking place around the financing of 2020/21 financial year.</p> <p>Reason for RAG: Is the need for ongoing discussions given the pandemic and the delay to the conclusion of these discussions by Q3.</p> <p>Route to Green: A report on the future development and management fee for the new Epping Leisure Centre will be presented to Cabinet in early 2021.</p>

Investment Assets

A review of the EFDC Investment Assets with the potential to sell assets with development potential to Qualis on a best value basis which will reflect rental uncertainty and general Covid 19 uncertainty. Additionally, to review the disposals of specific assets.

Q4

- Present options for decision to asset management committee prior to disposals

Amber


Asset Team updated the Portfolio Holder and senior officers on 14.12.20 with the opportunities available from the Council's Assets. Actions include checking with HRA development strategies and aligning with plans for town centre/high street recovery as well as engagement with CCGs. Consideration of assets return on investment and disposal of assets has been reviewed.

3. Quarterly KPI performance reporting

Stronger Communities KPIs				
Key Performance Indicator	Progress			Comments
Customer Services: Overall Customer Satisfaction	20/21	Actual	Target	
	Q1	69%	80%	
	Q2	71%	80%	
	Q3	71%	80%	Key customer frustration has been around missed waste collections and bin deliveries, which is being addressed plus feedback on ease of finding information on our website which will be addressed via our digital strategy. On a positive note, customers who have used our online forms have given good feedback on ease of self-serve.
Customer Services: First Point Resolution	20/21	Actual	Target	
	Q1	49%	45%	
	Q2	50%	45%	
	Q3	47%	45%	Call causation codes were re-introduced 1/11/20 after a period of significant under resourcing in the Contact Centre. Call volumes since that date were 11,102 of which 673 calls were straight forward transfers to Qualis. If this significant volume continues, we will look at ways of improving. The next highest area for call transfers was Planning with customers requiring technical support.
Customer Services: Complaints resolved within SLA	20/21	Actual	Target	
	Q1	n/a	n/a	Not previously reported
	Q2	n/a	n/a	Not previously reported
	Q3	90%	85%	A total of Ninety-one complaints received for the full quarter. Some examples for complaints include noise issues taking longer to resolve as lack of access to resident houses to set up noise equipment. Qualis have seen a delay in parts supply causing some delays. Waste complaints related to crew behaviour and missed collection which is being addressed by the service area.

Community Health and Wellbeing: No of homelessness approaches	20/21	Actual	Target	Comments
	Q1	118	n/a	
	Q2	96	n/a	
	Q3	66 (estimate)	n/a	Estimate only available due to reporting proximity to quarter end. No targets set, data only.
Community Health and Wellbeing: No of households in TA	20/21	Actual	Target	Comments
	Q1	n/a	100	
	Q2	n/a	100	
	Q3	145 (estimate)	100	Estimate only available due to reporting proximity to quarter end. Estimate based on trends from previous data.
Community Health and Wellbeing: Major works voids average time	20/21	Actual	Target	
	Q1	n/a	22 working days	
	Q2	n/a	22 working days	
	Q3	16.5 working days (estimate)	22 working days	Estimate only available due to reporting proximity to quarter end. Estimate based on first two weeks of December.
Community Health and Wellbeing: Total remote users including; web and social media figures across the Community, Culture and Wellbeing service area	20/21	Actual	Target	Comments
	Q1	n/a	n/a	
	Q2	n/a	n/a	
	Q3	172,367	175,000	
Community Health and Wellbeing: Total visits in person to Epping Forest District Museums including; schools outreach and loan box service	20/21	Actual	Target	Comments
	Q1	n/a	n/a	
	Q2	n/a	n/a	
	Q3	2568	1500	
Community Health and Wellbeing: Engagement in community, physical or cultural activity	20/21	Actual	Target	Comments
	Q1	n/a	n/a	
	Q2	n/a	n/a	
	Q3	2723	1325	
Community Health and Wellbeing: No of families in B&B accommodation for 6 weeks+	20/21	Actual	Target	Comments
	Q1	0	0	
	Q2	0	0	

	Q3	0	0	
Contracts:	20/21	Actual		Comments
% increase of leisure centre attendees from previous years quarter: Gym visits	Q1	n/a		
	Q2	Epping: 34% Loughton: 46% Ongar: 27% Waltham Abbey: 48%		Facilities re-opened 3rd August
	Q3	Epping: 11% Loughton: 16% Ongar: 16% Waltham Abbey: 7%		Facilities closed in November and re-opened on 3rd December and closed once again on 20th December, hence we are only comparing October's figures to the previous year. Despite pandemic, numbers are slightly increased from last year due to the gym extension.
Contracts:	20/21	Actual		Comments
% increase of leisure centre attendees from previous years quarter: Casual swimming	Q1	n/a		
	Q2	Loughton: 66% Waltham Abbey: 52%		Facilities re-opened 10th August
	Q3	Loughton: (25%) Waltham Abbey: (38%)		Negatives in brackets. Facilities closed in November and re-opened on 3rd December and closed once again on 20th December, hence we are only comparing October's figures to the previous year.

Contracts:	20/21	Actuals	Comments
Club Live membership	Q1	n/a	
	Q2	Epping: 1,300 Loughton: 3,300 Ongar: 960 Waltham Abbey: 2100	Positive feedback on the social distancing measures and cleanliness of centres has been received. However, on average there is a reduction of approximately 24% in fitness memberships against Q4 2020.
	Q3	Epping: 1358 Loughton: 3623 Ongar: 1065 Waltham Abbey: 2142	Facilities closed in November and re-opened on 3rd December and closed once again on 20th December, hence we are only comparing October's figures to the previous year.

Stronger Places KPIs				
Contracts Waste:	20/21	Actual	Target	Comments
Increase in recycling	Q1	59.62%	57%	
	Q2	59.55%	57%	
	Q3	tbc	57%	Actuals will not be available until mid-Jan. Data has to be verified by County.
Contracts Waste: Reduction in household waste	Q1	113	95	Due to the impact from households in lockdown and increase in individuals working from home.
	Q2	218	196	
	Q3	tbc	196	Actuals will not be available until mid-Jan. Data has to be verified by County.
Housing Management Rent Arrears	Q1	n/a	n/a	
	Q2	n/a	n/a	
	Q3	2.25% (estimate)	1.80%	Q3 performance is historically lower as a result of spending priorities of customers impacted by seasonal factors. This year, impact of job losses as a result of C19 statutory changes will compound the situation.
Planning and Development: Percentage of applications determined within agreed timelines: Major	Q1	n/a	n/a	
	Q2	n/a	n/a	
	Q3	75% (estimate)	80%	Represents a small number of the overall number of planning applications received. Estimate based on outturn in Q2 where performance is reported quarterly to HMRC.
Planning and Development: Percentage of applications determined within agreed timelines: Minor	Q1	n/a	n/a	
	Q2	n/a	n/a	
	Q3	86% (estimate)	90%	Estimate based on outturn in Q2 where performance is reported quarterly to HMRC.

Planning and Development: Percentage of applications determined within agreed timelines: Other	Q1	n/a	n/a	
	Q2	n/a	n/a	
	Q3	93% (estimate)	90%	Largest proportion of planning applications (includes household extensions). Estimate based on outturn in Q2 where performance is reported quarterly to HMRC.
Planning and Development: Housing Delivery Test progress	Q1	n/a	n/a	
	Q2	n/a	n/a	
	Q3	n/a	n/a	This is an annual requirement and figures are not collected quarterly. 2019 results were published by MHCLG in February 2020 - we had delivered at 50%. This put us in the buffer category where threshold is 95% but we are being assessed against the standard method figure of 742 rather than our housing requirement in the plan of 518 per annum and in accordance with the stepped trajectory

Stronger Council KPIs				
Key Performance Indicator	Progress			Comments
People:	20/21	Actual	Target	
Diversity & Inclusion – % of workforce by Ethnicity	Q1	n/a	n/a	The target is representative of Epping Forest District general population
	Q2	BME: 6%	BME: 9.5%	White: 73%, Undisclosed: 15%, Unreported: 6%.
	Q3	BME: 5%	BME: 9.5%	White: 72%, Undisclosed: 18%, Unreported: 5%
People: Diversity & Inclusion – % of workforce with Disability	Q1	n/a	n/a	The target is representative of Epping Forest District general population
	Q2	7.00%	10.60%	
	Q3	7.00%	10.60%	
People: Staff Turnover %	Q1	n/a	n/a	
	Q2	3.50%	2.75%	
	Q3	2.43%	2.75%	Public Sector median turnover rate is 11% per annum. Q3 turnover figure is below target
People: Sickness Absence – average number of days per employee	Q1	n/a	n/a	
	Q2	1.65 days	2 days	
	Q3	3.5 days	2 days	Winter months typically have a higher number of sickness absence.

KPIs not reported this quarter:

- Sustainable Travel: agreement on measurements will take place in Q4.